

releasably connected to one another. Further, claim 1 requires "a recess. . . in one of said parts" and "an elevation. . . in the other of said parts, said elevation being elastically fitted into said recess to form a latched click connection".

Claim 1 further requires that the two sheet metal parts be held "in a secured position by a hook connection between said recess and said elevation". Neither Somers nor Walsh describes or teaches such a structure.

Somers describes an embodiment in Fig. 15 in which a bar 10 is provided with an opening 10a and a second bar 11 is provided with a spring lug 11d for snapping into the opening 10a in the first bar 10 (See Fig. 12). The bars, 10, 11 are not held in a secured position by a hook connection between the recess 10a and elevation 11b as required by claim 1. Accordingly, a rejection of claim 1 as being clearly anticipated by Somers is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 102(b).

Walsh describes an embodiment of Fig. 5 in which the free edge 50 of a duct 56 is slid into a channel 34 of a connector member 12. The free edge 50 has a plurality of wedge shaped projections 60 that engage on a ledge 36 in the channel 34 of the connector member 12. Walsh is void of any teaching that the connector member 12 and duct 56 are held in a secured position by a hook connection between the ledge 36 and the projections 60. Accordingly, a rejection of claim 1 as being anticipated by Walsh is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 102(b).

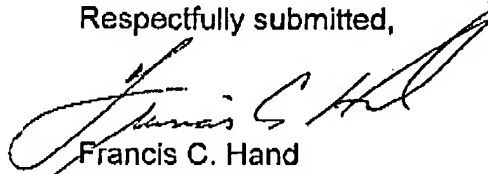
Claim 1 has also been rejected as being unpatentable over either Somers or Walsh taken with any of Nutter '559, Peterson '008 and Peterson '309. Issue is taken in this respect. Specifically, to utilize the sheet metal structures of either Somers or Walsh in a process engineering column as in Nutter '559, Peterson '008 and Peterson '309 would not

result in a claimed structure for reasons as expressed above with respect to claim 1. Accordingly, a rejection of claim 1 as being unpatentable over either Somers or Walsh taken together with any one of Nutter '559, Peterson '008 and Peterson '309 is not warranted pursuant to the provisions of 35 USC 103.

Claim 7 depends from claim 1 and is believed to be allowable for similar reasons.

The application is believed to be in obvious condition for allowance and such is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Francis C. Hand
Reg. No. 22,280

CARELLA, BYRNE BAIN, GILFILLAN,
CECCHI, STEWART & OLSTEIN
Five Becker Farm Road
Roseland, NJ 07068
Phone: 973-994-1700
Fax: 973-994-1744

#320235